



THE

CASKET.

“With sweetest flowers enrich’d,
From various gardens cull’d with care.”

BY CHARLES CANDID.

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EXTRACT FROM

“*THINKS-I-TO-MYSELF.*”

One day when I was sitting with my mother, as usual, but a considerable time after the scene I have been describing, the identical party I have before spoken of, came again—videlicet, Mrs. and Miss Fidgets, the troublesome child, and the two *pugs*. Again was Mrs. Fidget delighted to see my mother, and my mother her—again did the one intend it as a great and singular favor, and again did the other receive it as such—again was the troublesome child, instead of getting his ears boxed, as I thought he deserved, pronounced to be a *sweet* child, and a very *fine boy* of his *age*, though in reality as *puny* and *sickly* as my mother really thought him when he was with us last—again were the dirty pugs admired and caressed—again were they pressed to stay longer, thanked for their kindness, and urged to come *again*. *Thinks-I-to-myself*, what can all this mean? Is my mother that downright hypocrite, that artful deceiver, deliberately to impose upon all her friends in this manner; and are they all such silly dupes as to be so easily taken in? *Thinks-I-to-myself*, I know what I’ll do; so I jumped up from my seat, hastily quitted the room, and ran into a field near the house, which happened to be separated from the avenue by a high and thick hawthorn hedge, which continued a considerable way, and where I knew I should

be able to hear all the friendly remarks of the company as they quitted Grumblethrope Hall.

I had not been long there before out came the whole groupe, and as good luck would have it, they came quite near enough to me to admit of my receiving into my ears, every soft and gentle expression that fell from their amiable tongues. "Thank my stars," says the worthy Mrs. Fidget, "*that visit's over; we need not go there again for some time; it is all so formal, and so prim, one's half afraid to open one's mouth.*" "Poor little Tommy, how do you like that old lady?" "Not at all," says the pretty child,—"*nor I neither, my dear,*" says Mrs. Fidget,—"*nor I,*" says Miss Matilda,—"*nor I,*" says little Miss Nancy,—"*what a strange creature,*" adds Mrs. Fidget, "*is that hopeful son of hers! he never speaks a word: I believe he's an idiot; and yet to see the foolish fondness and credulity of parents, I verily believe they fancy him wise enough to be Prime Minister; but he'll die I think; he's as thin as a threadpaper, and looks for all the world in that black jacket of his, like a half-starved chimney sweeper. Did you see how he muttered something to himself as he went out of the room? It will be a great mercy if he is taken out of the world, for it is a shame for such *cladpoles* to be born to such an inheritance—here, Matilda, we must turn down here; I may as well go and see old Mrs. Creep-mouse now I am so near, and then we shall have killed two birds with one stone.*"

Thinks-I-to-myself, so you will Mrs. Fidget, or perhaps *three*; for she seemed to have taken pretty good aim at myself as well as at my mother, and old Mrs. Creep-mouse, and I confess I felt so utterly astonished and confounded, that I did not quite know whether I stood on my head or my heels; however, the first thing that struck me was, that my poor dear parents were quite exonerated: *Thinks-I-to-myself*, it all comes of their knowing the world! no, there's nothing in it beyond self-defence. Mrs. Fidget's singular favor and prodigious friendship, is evidently no better than a deliberate attempt to kill my poor mother with the same stone she

kills Mrs. Creepmouse, and to rejoice all the way home at having done it effectually. I returned to the house, heartily glad to have made so successful an experiment, though instead of curing me of my malady, I plainly saw it would increase it abominably. I went back to my mother, and as might naturally be expected, found her as much delighted to be left alone again, as the Fidgets were to get away. I was almost tempted to say, do you know that you and Mrs. Creepmouse have both been by this time killed by one stone ! but I must have, by doing so, betrayed my plan of listening, which I had great reason to think would have excited her displeasure ; for she had always discouraged it as a matter of great impertinence, great disingenuousness, and great meanness, both in myself and my sister, adding the old proverb, that "*listeners never hear any good of themselves*," which I had pretty well found to be true, in the compliment paid by the lovely Mrs. Fidget, to my poor thread-paper form, chimney-sweeping jacket, and cled-pole.

It would be impossible to recount but the hundredth thousandth part of the strange scenes to which I was witness, and the strange remarks they suggested, before I was grown up to be a man : but most of them till then were of a nature I have alluded to. My enmity to Mrs. Fidget soon wore off as I made greater progress in the knowledge of the world. I soon found that Mrs. Creepmouse could just as willingly have killed Mrs. Fidget, as Mrs. Fidget could have killed Mrs. Creepmouse, and that in the true way of visiting, the more havoc and destruction one stone could make, the better to all parties. I soon found that people were troublesome to each other by settled compact, treaty and agreement, not signed, sealed and delivered indeed in any form, but concluded to be so, and therefore never to be violated. I soon found that none were duped, none really taken in, none really deceived : that " I am happy to see you," meant no more in reality than, " that I am come because I could not help it," and that " pray stay longer," implied little else than " I wish you were gone," or some such elegant

valediction : still I could not break myself of my soliloquies ; they were for ever recurring ;—in the mean time I tried to be as civil and decent as I could in my reflections ; *Thinks-I-to-myself* that's a *lie* !—never once passed the threshold of my thoughts ; but when any thing very contrary to the truth seemed to strike me, especially where ladies were concerned, the utmost asperity of thought indulged, was no greater than *Thinks-I-to-myself*, that's a *bounce* ; or a *fib* ; or a *hum* :—and so on.

HAPPINESS.—A FRAGMENT.

“ The scenes of my life have been sad,” said a poor Frenchman, who scrambled upon one of the most precipitous mountains of North Wales, and was now pensively leaning on his stick, and, casting a mournful look towards the wide expanse of waters which bounded his prospect. “ The scenes of my life have been sad,” repeated he, and a tear silently stole down his cheek, as the recollection of the past again struck his soul. “ I have pursued the bubble happiness, all over the world, and have lived but to find it a phantom of the brain—I have suffered the torture of the inquisition in Spain—I have been chained to the galleys in Italy—I have starved on the mountains in Switzerland—I have groaned as a slave in Turkey—I have languished beneath the tyranny in France—and lastly, I have been whipped as a vagabond in England. I am grown grey in misery, and old age has overrun me in wretchedness !” The tears streamed plentifully down the cheeks of the unfortunate old man, as this painful retrospect presented itself to the mind. The sun was just casting his last rays over the waters, and the west was tinged with the streaks of vermillion gold. Not a breath of air ruffled the surface of the deep—not a sound invaded the ear—all was stillness and serenity, except when the last notes of the ascending sky lark sunk on the air, while the feathered songster himself was lost in distance. He insensibly felt his spirits tranquillized by the universal harmony that seemed to reign around, the balm of peace descended upon his soul : he looked upon the wanderings of his past days,

with a calm, but melancholy regret: it was too late to begin his life anew; and after having spent his youth in toil and vexation, he now felt that a little rest was necessary. When the sun had sunk beneath the horizon, he laid himself on the turf and soon dropped into a sweet and uninterrupted slumber. In the morning he rose refreshed. Beneath the wide-spreading branches of a venerable tree, he constructed a little hut. His meat was supplied by the roots and herbs of the valley; and the crystal spring, which doubled by his dwelling, afforded him a wholesome beverage. Every evening beheld him sinking peaceably to repose on his bed of leaves, and every dawn of day saw him rise refreshed and cheerful. In a short time he discovered that he was happy. This discovery astonished him. He was insulated—an outcast—depending on the spontaneous products of the earth for sustenance, and only sheltering from the inclemency of the weather, by a cabin, over which the den of wild beasts possessed many advantages. Under such circumstances, that he could be happy, was to him incomprehensible. After musing for some time on the strangeness of the fact, he found out that all the miseries of his past life were to be imputed to himself; that they arose from his own restlessness and ambition; that the true philosopher's stone, which converts every thing it touches into gold, the real source of human happiness, is contentment.

From the Independent Mechanic.

ON POETRY.

It is surprising to consider what an egregious error the generality of mankind, (I mean those of a limited education,) have fallen into, respecting the truly sublime art of *Poetry*. Every piece of composition, if written in measured lines of a certain number of syllables, alternately accented on the first, second, or third, is by them denominated *poetry*. And even if these rules are totally neglected, or violated in the most unqualified manner, yet if the terminations of each line chime or jingle in concert, it is *poetry*! But true *poetry* can exist and

enrapture, independent of rules or rhymes. It disdains, in fact, to be restrained by laws which but cripple its aspiring powers ; it spurns the fetters forged by scholastic pedants, and snatches

“ — a grace beyond the reach of art.”

Poetry is the same thing, in all languages ; one is no more favorable to it than another. The discordant dialect of Nature's children in the wilderness of the west, can display this heavenly wonder-working power to as great advantage as the melodious tones of the refined Italian. Poetry consists in striking figures, brilliant ideas, fine conceptions, and correct similies. No matter what language this is in, or whether in any language at all. If a man but has it in his mind, if he but admit it into his imagination, it is *poetry*, whether it ever be expressed or not. I have no doubt that the world abounds with *poets*, equal to any that have ever written, who have never been taught the use of the quill. Language is but the dress of poetry. Some like one color or fashion, and some another ; but the majority of mankind are so taken in by this dress, that they receive every imposture for the genius of poesy who can assume her garb.

A modern tourist observes, that the dialect of the Italian tongue is undoubtedly the most favorable of any for that exertion of *rhyming* promptitude, described by most travellers who make that delightful tour, the practitioners of which are there called *Improvvisatore*. To string together at pleasure an extempore poem of compliment or condolence, undoubtedly requires, in any language, a fertile imagination, and a ready wit : But the Italian is particularly adapted to favor *this particular species of impromptu*. It contains an almost endless number of *synonomous*, and allows a liberty of mutilating words, unknown to other languages, to say nothing of the convenient augmentations and diminutives, by which, for instance,

Grande may be at the will of the singer, *Grandio* ; or, if it suits better, *Grandioso* ; or, if the measure require it, *Grandissimo* ; and *Piccolo*, (a little fellow,) may be va-

ried to *Piccolissimo* ; or, *Povera*, (a poor girl,) may be, and often is, by whining beggars, most musically converted into *Poverella*.

The language abounds in vowels. Several letters at a time may be dropped at will ; whole sentences, as well as particular words, are used only in poetry : thus every phrase may be a verse, and every word a rhyme ; and the Italians, amused and deceived by the melody of their language, and charmed with the pleasure it affords the ear, require from the poet neither *sentiment* nor *idea*, and permit him or her to introduce the lowest vulgarities, as well as the most unnatural images and over-strained allusions. By the help of all these favorable circumstances, a man, but especially a woman, of parts little quicker than ordinary, may produce, *without a miracle*, amusement enough for people disposed to be amused.

SELIM.

Singular account of a MUSICAL PIGEON.

An odd thing, to which I was this morning witness has called my thoughts away to a curious train of reflections on the animal race, and how far they may be made companionable and intelligent.

The famous Ferdinand Bertoni, so well known in London by his long residence among us, and from the undisputed merit of his compositions, now inhabits this, his native city ; and, being fond of dumb creatures, as we call them, took to *fietting* a pigeon, one of the few animals which can live at Venice, where, as I observed, scarcely any quadrupeds can be admitted, or would exist, with any degree of comfort to themselves. This creature has, however, by keeping his master company, I trust, obtained so perfect an ear and taste for music, that no one who sees his behaviour can doubt for a moment of the pleasure he takes in hearing Mr. Bertoni play and sing ; for, as soon as he sits down to the instrument, Columbo begins shaking his wings, perches on the piano forte, and express the most undubitable emotions of delight. If, however, he or any one else strike a note false, or make any discord on the keys, the dove never

fails to show evident tokens of anger and distress, and, if teased too long, grows quite enraged, pecking the offender's legs and fingers in such a manner, as to leave nothing less doubtful than the sincerity of his resentment. Signora Cecilia Guiliani, a scholar of Bertoni's, who has received some overtures from the London theatre lately, will if ever she arrives there, bear testimony to the truth of an assertion very difficult to believe ; and to which I should hardly myself give credit, were I not witness to it every morning that I choose to call and confirm my own belief. A friend present protested he should feel afraid to touch the harpsicord before so nice a critic : and, though we all laughed at the assertion, Bertoni declared he never knew the bird's judgment fail ; and that he often kept him out of the room, for fear of his affronting, or tormenting, those who came to take musical instructions.

With regard to other actions of life, I saw nothing particular in the pigeon, but his tameness and strong attachment to his master ; for, though never winged, and only clipped a very little, he never seeks to range away from the house, or quit his master's service, any more than the dove of Anacreon,

“ While his better lot bestows,
Sweet repast, and soft repose ;
And, when feast and frolic tire,
Drops asleep upon his lyre.”

Mrs. Piozzi's Travels.

VARIETY.

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AMBROSIO, MARQUIS DE SPINOLA,

Was one of the greatest generals of his time ; he commanded the forces of Philip the Second, against the United Provinces, revolted from his dominion.

When some one told him, that John de Ver, a famous commander of his time, died of having nothing to do, he answered “ Upon my word, that is sufficient to kill any general.”

Apollonian Wreath.

For the Casket.

MR. CANDID,

The following lines were penned by me in the year 1802, as they were repeated, by a man who was, at turns, apparently deranged. They are almost an exact picture of his situation at that time ; but whether they are original or not I shall leave for the candid to determine. OLARIM.

Now spring returns ; but not to me returns ;

The vernal joys, my better years have known :

Dim in my breast, life's dying taper burns,

And all the joys of life, with health are gone.

Starting and shiv'ring in th' inconstant wind,

Meagre and pale, the ghost of what I was,

Beneath some blasted tree I lie reclin'd,

And count the silent moments as they pass.

The winged moments, whose unstaying speed

No art can stop, or in their course arrest ;

Whose time will shortly count me with the dead,

And lay me down in peace with those that rest.

Oft morning dreams presage approaching fate,

And morning dreams, as poets tell, are true,

Led by pale ghosts I enter death's dark gate

And bid the realms of light and life adieu.

I hear the hapless wail, the shriek of wo ;

I see the muddy wave, the dreary shore,

I see the spot, where we are doom'd to go,

Where mortals visit and return no more.

Farewel ye blooming fields and cheerful plains ;

Enough for me the church-yard's lonely mound :

Where pleasing melancholy, in silence reigns,

And the rank grass waves o'er the cheerless ground.

There let me sleep forgotten in the clay,

When death shall shut these weary, aching eyes,

Rest in the hope of an eternal day,

Till the last trump shall 'wake the silent dead, and the

last morn arise.

THE COTTAGERS.—A PASTORAL.

Embosom'd round with circling hills,
Lorenzo's cottage stood ;
Where beauty all the landscape fills,
Hem'd in with groves of wood.
For, though he was a scholar bright,
And felt the Muse's fire,
Nought could so much his soul delight,
As nature's rude attire.

Disgusted with the world's deceit,
Its vanity and pride,
He chose this sylvan still, retreat,
Where love and peace reside.

The pine and hemlocks gloomy shade,
Dispers'd beneath his toil ;
His fire and steel ; his plough and spade,
Soon made the desert smile.

He planted groves, and myrtle bow'rs,
The glebe he sow'd with grain ;
He led the rills among the flow'rs,
That deck'd the smiling plain.

The vines, soft twining round the trees,
Display their golden fruits ;
And music, floating on the breeze,
The raptur'd ear salutes.

Soft plots of grass and herbage green,
A river's bank bestow'd,
While through its foliage glitt'ring seen,
Its gentle current flow'd.

As erst in Eden's blest abode,
Two saint-like lovers dwelt,
When nought but beauty, nature show'd,
And nought but joy was felt.

So in this verdant, cultur'd vale,
The " dancing loves" resort,
Lorenzo and his fair Rosale,
From morn till evening wrought.

Their love was not the meteor's blaze,
That raves and disappears ;
But mutual friendship's purest rays,
Increasing with their years.

Secluded from the world's turmoil,
And all its empty show,
He fed his flocks and till'd the soil,
Whence blessings round him flow.

And while the birds their carols sung,
And lambkins join'd in play ;
While nature's beauties round him hung—
Thus would Lorenzo say :

“ What charms have grandeur, wealth, or fame,

“ When once compar'd to these ?

“ And what is honor but a name,

“ The giddy mind to please !

“ And what is learning's boasted pride !

“ The fulsome pedant's theme,

“ With strife and envy by its side,

“ It proves a madd'ning dream.

“ But here, within the bow'rs of peace,

“ Are pleasures more refin'd,

“ And works of nature never cease,

“ T' instruct a virtuous mind.

“ Let war's dread banner be unfurl'd,

“ And statesmen rant and bawl—

“ Let factions split the jarring world,

“ And states and empires fall ;

“ Let storms of passion rock the earth,

“ And fraud and vice prevail—

“ Yet peace sweet innocence and mirth,

“ Reign in this happy vale.”—*Ægis.*

TO SLEEP.—*From the Halcyon Luminary.*
Come, gentle sleep ! attend thy vot'ry's prayer,
And, though death's image, to my couch repair,
How sweet, thus lifeless, yet with life to lie !
Thus, without dying, O how sweet to die !

TO A SNOW DROP FLOWER.

Welcome sweet harbinger of op'ning spring,
 Thy pensive beauties caught my wand'ring eye ;
 I've pluck'd thee, solitary flower, to bring
 Thy tender frame, where no rude blasts are nigh.

I see, thou scarce canst rear thy drooping head,
 For frosts inclement pierc'd thy lovely form ;
 But I'll transplant thee to a warmer bed,
 My hand shall raise thee, and my fire shall warm.

Oh ! would some sympathizing gentle hand,
 Thus raise the human flower, when Mis'ry's dart,
 And keen Affliction, with her scorpion wand,
 Would make a victim of the youthful heart.

How would my heart rejoice, could I relieve,
 And wipe away the tear from Sorrow's eye ;
 The child of suff'ring could sweet comfort give,
 Or change into a smile the widow's sigh !

Alas ! the consolation I would grant
 To others, I myself must never know ;
 But if the means, the power to bless, I want,
 I can commiserate, though not bestow !

*In the church yard of Amwell, (England,) is this curious
 Epitaph.*

That which a being was, what is it ? show :
 That being which it was it is not now ;
 To be what 'tis, is not to be you see :
 That which now is not, shall a being be.

—————*—————
 DIED,

*In this city, on the 15th inst. Charlotte, daughter of Mr.
 Isaac Power, aged 1 year and 7 months.*

On the 17th, Capt. Ezra Smith, aged 37.

On the 18th, Mrs. Lucretia Smith, aged 58.

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